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FURTHER IMPROVEMENT OF USSR AGRICULTURE

The February Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, as a result of damages caused by the war and the 1946 drought, issued a decree in 1947, "Measures for Improving Agriculture in the Postwar Period." Due to the all-out effort total-cost agricultural production in 1947 increased 32 percent, as a whole, and 48 percent in branches of husbandry. The output of grain during the year increased 58 percent; cotton, 21 percent; potatoes, 30 percent; sugar beets, 190 percent; sunflower, 79 percent. An especially notable result of 1947 agricultural production is the rise in yield capacity to the new level.

During the postwar period, industry showed a marked increase in the production of tractors, combines, and other agricultural machinery. In 1947, the output of tractors was 109 percent and other agricultural machines 106 percent over that of 1946, while fertilization increased 35 percent.

The Soviet State materially aided collective farms, state farms, and Machine-Tractor Stations which suffered from regional droughts. Collective farms received seed grain and livestock fodder, and collective farmers were given food supplies by the State. A large consignment of tractors and other machines were sent to the MES of these regions.

To carry out the decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, collective farms, MFS, and state farms undertook socialist competition and fulfilled their obligation. For example, collective farms of the Alay Ray raised a large crop, overfulfilling the delivery quota of grain to the State, and thus guaranteeing a high per-workday distribution of products and financial compensation to the collective farmers.

Other regions also undertook competition. In Voronezh Oblast, 3,686 collective farms, 8,000 husbandry brigades, and more than 20,000 detachments entered into competition, fulfilling obligations to the State prior to schedule, and delivering close to 11 million pud of grain in excess of plan. Eighty-two of the 85 rayons of the oblast exceeded delivery quotas of grain to the State.

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As a result of the successful completion by industry and agriculture of the first 2 years of the Five-Year Plan, the essential material preparations for the realization of currency reforms and abolition of the ration system were made in 1947.

The collective farms, MTS, and state farms not only attained a high yield in 1947, but also made preparations for insuring high productivity in the current year. The area of winter grain sown increased 3.5 million hectares, and that plowed 8 million hectares in 1947 over that of 1946. Collective farms fulfilled the sowing plan 103 percent. Tractor work increased 29 percent over 1946, and the output of one tractor increased 21 percent as a result of better utilization. In 1947 MTS completed work on 37 million hectares more than in 1946, reduced the time, and raised the quality of tractor work. The 1947 achievements were considerable, but could have been even greater if all collective farms, MTS, and state farms, as a whole, had fulfilled their production plans.

In regions of Siberia and North Kazakhstan, the deadline for spring field work was extended, resulting in the late ripening and harvesting of spring wheat. In regions along the Volga, in Siberia, the northeast oblasts of Kazakhstan SSR, and the black soil belt, the task of increasing spring wheat sowing was not fulfilled, and in a number of provinces was even decreased in comparison with 1946. The restoration of buckwheat sowing was extremely slow. In a number of regions, simply because of poor care, young crops became overgrown with weeds and the yield of this most valuable supply crop was greatly reduced. In some areas, especially in the central and central black soil zone, the work of restoring public potato and vegetable sowing on collective farms lagged. Many MTS did not fulfill the planned cultivation of fallow fields, combine harvesting, and tillage.

The plan for development of animal husbandry was not met in many areas. The restoration of hog raising has been even slower, especially on the collective farms of Krasnodar Kray, Saratov, Tambov, Penza, Voronezh, Rostov Oblasts and the Ukrainian SSR. Many collective farms still do not have hog farms, and where they do exist, they are extremely small and therefore unprofitable. Little real effort was made in the preparation of a fodder base, thus retarding the development of livestock raising and the increase of its productivity.

The 1948 program calls for a 15.6 percent increase in the sown area of collective farms. A number of republics and oblasts are to increase the sown area to the prewar level. It is proposed to increase the sowing of grain crops on collective farms 12 percent, and the sowing of spring wheat 25 percent. The sowing of industrial crops is increasing considerably, including sugar beets, 19 percent; potatoes, 47 percent; and fodder crops, 64 percent. The area under potato and vegetable crops must attain prewar size. It is necessary in 1948 not only to obtain more grain and industrial crops, but also to prepare all prerequisites for a large harvest in 1949, to increase the plowing of fallow land by 10 percent and thereby surpass the prewar level, and to increase the tilling of plowed fields 73 percent. It is planned that the area cultivated by tractor in the current year be increased 31 million hectares, that the 1940 level of plowing and cultivating fallow land and plowing under stubble be surpassed, and that the 1940 level of sowing winter crops and plowing be attained.

The Altay Kray increased spring wheat sowing 427,000 hectares in 1947, and has promised in 1948 to increase the sown area of spring crops 616,000 hectares, of which 430,000 hectares will be given to spring wheat. The area of sown spring wheat in the region will comprise 2 million hectares and will almost attain prewar level. Altay collective farmers promise to harvest no less than 30 to 85 pud of spring wheat per hectare. Following the example of this Kray, one oblast after

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another has promised to increase and meet its obligations for 1948.

The February Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party pointed out that the future increase in collective farm output is hampered by low and outdated standards. Much was done to eliminate the old standards in 1947, but this work is not completed. Many cases still remain where collective farms with the same conditions have different standards for the same type of work. All these old standards must be replaced by more progressive norms, which will stimulate the collective farmers to greater operating efficiency. It is therefore necessary to review the output standards and the evaluation of work per workday, discard outdated standards, replace them with more advanced ones, discuss and confirm the new standards in a public meeting of collective farmers, and make them the basis of the 1948 production plan for collective farms.

In 1947 MFS accomplished a great deal. The MFS of Kuybyshev Oblast, for example, fulfilled the 1947 tractor plan 113.8 percent, with each 15-horsepower tractor working an average of 450 hectares of shallow tillage, or 105 hectares more than in 1940. MFS, however, have not taken full advantage of tractor parks and should be encouraged to do so by Party leadership.

Collective farms and MFS failed to fulfill their obligations in previous years because the MFS did not carry out their contracts with collective farms on time, when actually this should have been done before the beginning of spring sowing.

Most violations of agricultural artel statutes have been eliminated as a result of measures adopted by the Party and Government in 1946. The remaining violations which still exist in some regions must no longer be tolerated.

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